

# Destiny of the United States.

## S P E E C H

DELIVERED BY

# WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

AT

ST. PAUL, SEPTEMBER 18, 1860.

FELLOW CITIZENS—One needs to have had something of the experience that it has been my fortune to have, living in a State at an early period of its material development and social improvement, and growing up with its growing greatness, in order to appreciate the feeling with which I am oppressed on this, my first entrance into the capital of the State of Minnesota. Every step of my progress since I reached the Northern Mississippi has been attended by an agreeable and great surprise. I had early read the works in which the geographer had described the scenes on which I was entering, and I had studied these scenes in the finest production of art. But still the grandeur, the luxuriance, the beneficence, the geniality of this region were entirely unconceived. When I saw these sentinel walls that look down on the Mississippi, even as I beheld them in their autumnal verdure, just when the earliest tinges of the fall give variety to the luxuriance of the forest, I thought how much of taste and genius had been wasted in celebrating the highlands of Scotland before civilized man had reached the banks of the Mississippi. And then that beautiful Lake Pepin scene at sunset, when the autumnal green of the hills was lost in a deep blue hue that imitates that of the heavens. The genial yellow atmosphere reflected the rays of the setting sun, and the skies above seemed to come down to spread their gorgeous drapery over this scene. It was a piece of upholstery such as no hand but that of nature could have made; and it was but the vestibule to the capital of the State of Minnesota—a State which I have loved, which I ever shall love, for more reasons than time would allow me to mention, but chiefly because it is one of three States which my own voice has been potential in bringing into the federal Union within the time that I have been engaged in the federal councils. Every one of the three was a free State, and I believe, on my soul, that of the

whole three Minnesota is the freest of all. (Loud applause.)

I find myself now, for the first time, on the high lands of the centre of the continent of North America, equidistant from the waters of Hudson's Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, from the Atlantic ocean to the ocean in which the sun sets—here, on the spot where spring up, almost side by side, so that they may kiss each other, the two great rivers—the one of which, pursuing its strange, capricious, majestic, vivacious career through cascade and river, and rapid, lake after lake, and river after river; finally, after a course of twenty-five hundred miles, brings your commerce half way to the ports of Europe; and the other, while meandering through woodland and prairie a distance of twenty-five hundred miles, taking in tributary after tributary from the East and from the West, bringing together the waters from the western declivity of the Alleghanies and those which trickle down the Eastern sides of the Rocky Mountains, finds the Atlantic Ocean in the Gulf of Mexico. (Applause.) Here is the central place where the agriculture of the richest region of North America must bear its tribute to the supplies of the whole world. (Applause.) On the East, all along the shore of Lake Superior, and on the West stretching in one broad plain, in a belt quite across the continent, is a country where State after State is yet to rise, and where the productions for the support of human society in other crowded States must be brought forth. This is, then, a commanding field; but it is as commanding in regard to the destinies of this continent as it is in regard to its commercial future, for power is not to reside permanently on the eastern slope of the Alleghany Mountains, nor in the seaports. Seaports have always been overrun and controlled by the people of the interior. The people of the inland and of the upland—those who inhabit the sources of the mighty waters—are they who

supply them with wealth and power. The power of this government hereafter is not to be established on either the Atlantic or the Pacific coast. The seaports will be the mouths by which we shall communicate and correspond with Europe; but the power that shall speak and shall communicate and express the will of men on this continent is to be located in the Mississippi Valley, and at the sources of the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence. (Loud applause.) In other days, studying what might, perhaps, have seemed to others trifling or visionary, I have cast about for the future, the ultimate, central seat of power of the North American people. I had looked at Quebec and New Orleans, at Washington and at San Francisco, at Cincinnati and at St. Louis, and it had been the result of my best conjecture that the seat of power for North America would yet be found in the valley of Mexico, that the glories of the Aztec capital would be renewed, and that city would become ultimately the Capital of the United States of America. But I have corrected that view, and I now believe that the ultimate, last seat of power on this continent will be found somewhere within a radius not very far from the very spot where I stand, at the head of navigation on the Mississippi river. (Loud Applause.)

Fellow citizens, I have often seen, but never with great surprise, that on the occasion of a great revival of religion in a community where I happen to live, the oldest, the most devout, the most religious preacher, he whose life had seemed to me and to the world to be better ordered, according to the laws of God, and in affection to the interests of mankind—that such as he discovered, in the heat of this religious excitement, that he had been entirely mistaken in his own experience, and that he now found out, to his great grief and astonishment, that he had never before been converted, and that now, for the first time, he had become a Christian. (Laughter.) While I stand here I almost fall into the notion that I am in the category of that preacher—(laughter)—and that, although I cannot charge myself with having been really a seditious, or even a disloyal citizen, or an unobedient public man, I have yet never exactly understood the duties that I owed to society and the spirit that belongs to an American statesman. This is because I had never, until now, occupied that place whence I could take in and grasp the whole grand panorama of the continent, for the happiness of whose present people and of whose future millions it is the duty of an American statesman to labor. I have often said, and indeed thought, that one would get a very adequate, a very high idea of the greatness of this American republic of ours if he stood, as I have done, on the deck of an American ship-of-war as she crossed the Mediterranean, and, passing through the Ionian Islands, ascended the Adriatic, bearing at the masthead the stripes and stars, that commanded respect and inspired fear, equally among the semi-barbarians of Asia and the most polite and powerful of the nations of Europe—I have often thought that I could lift myself up to the conception of the greatness of this republic of ours by taking my stand on the terrace of the Capitol at Washington, and contemplating the concentration of the political power of the American people, through following out in my imagination the despatches by

which that will, after being modified by the executive and legislative departments, went forth as laws and edicts, and ordinances, for the government of a great people. But, after all, no such place as either of these is equal to that which I now occupy.

I seem to myself to stand here on this eminence as the traveler who climbs to the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, and there, through the opening in that dome appears to be in almost direct and immediate communication with the Almighty power that directs and controls the actions and the wills of men, as he looks down from that eminence on the priests and votaries who vainly try, by poring over books and prayers, to study out the will of the Eternal. So it is with me. I can stand here and look far off into the Northwest and see the Russian, as he busily occupies himself in establishing seaports and towns, and fortifications, as outposts of the empire of St. Petersburg, and I can say, "Go on; build up your outposts to the Arctic ocean. They will yet become the outposts of my own country, to extend the civilization of the United States in the Northwest." So I look on Prince Rupert's land and Canada, and see how an ingenious people, and a capable, enlightened government, are occupied with bridging rivers and making railroads and telegraphs, to develop, organize, create and preserve the great British provinces of the north, by the great lakes, the St. Lawrence and around the shores of Hudson's Bay, and I am able to say, "It is very well; you are building excellent States to be hereafter admitted into the American Union." (Applause.) I can look southward and see, amid all the convulsions that are breaking up the ancient provinces of Spain, the Spanish American republics—see in their decay and dissolution the preparatory stage for their reorganization in free, equal and independent members of the United States of America. Standing on such an eminence and looking with that far distant range of vision, I can now look down on the States and the people of the Atlantic coast—of Maine and Massachusetts, and New York and Pennsylvania, and Virginia and the Carolinas, and Georgia and Louisiana, and Texas, and round by the Pacific coast to California and Oregon—I can hear their disputes, their fretful controversies, their threats that if their own separate interests are not gratified and consulted by the federal government they will separate from this Union—will secede from it, will dissolve it; and while I hear on their busy sidewalks these clamorous contentions I am able to say, "Peace; be still. These subjects of contention and dispute that so irritate, and anger, and provoke you, are but ephemeral and temporary. These institutions which you so much desire to conserve, and for which you think you would sacrifice the welfare of the people of this continent, are almost as ephemeral as yourselves." *The man is born to-day who will live to see the American Union, the American people—the whole of them—coming into the harmonious understanding that this is the land of the free men—for the free men—that it is the land for the white man; and that whatever elements there are to disturb its present peace or irritate the passions of its possessors will in the end—and that end will come before long—pass away, without capacity in any way to disturb the harmony of or endanger this great Union.* (Applause.)

Fellow citizens, it is under the influence of resolutions like these that I thank God here to-day, more fervently than ever, that I live in such a great country as this, and that my lot has been cast in it—not before the period when political society was to be organized, nor yet in that distant period when it is to collapse and fall into ruin, but that I live in the very day and hour when political society is to be effectually organized throughout this entire country. Fellow citizens, we seem here and now to feel, to come into the knowledge of, that high necessity which compels every State in this Union to be, not separated and several States, but one part of the American republic. We see and feel more than ever, when we come up here, that fervent heat of benevolence and love for the region in which our lot is cast, that will not suffer the citizen of Maine, the citizen of South Carolina, the citizen of Texas, or the citizen of Wisconsin or Minnesota, to be aliens to, or enemies of, each other, but which on the other hand compels them to be members of one great political family. Aye, and we see more—how it is that while society is convulsed by the jealousies between native and foreign born in our Atlantic cities and on our Pacific coast, and tormented with the rivalries and jealousies produced by difference of birth, of language and of religion, here in this central point of the republic the German, and the Irishman, and the Italian, and the Frenchman, and the Hollander, becomes, in spite of himself, almost completely, in his own eyes and in his children's, an American citizen. (Applause.) We see and feel, therefore, the unity, in other words, that constitutes, and compels us to constitute, not many nations, not many peoples, but one nation and one people only. (Applause.) Valetudinarians of the North have been in the habit of seeking the sunny skies of the South to restore their wasting frames under consumption; and valetudinarians of the South have been accustomed to seek the skies of Italy for the same relief. Now you see the valetudinarians of the whole continent, from the frozen North and from the burning South, resort to the sources of the Mississippi for an atmosphere which shall reinvigorate and restore them to health. (Applause.) Do you not see and feel here that this atmosphere has another virtue—that when men from Maine and from Carolina, and from Mississippi and from New Hampshire, and from England and Ireland and Scotland, from Germany and from all other portions of the world, come up here into this same valley of the Mississippi, the atmosphere, when it once becomes naturalized to their lungs, becomes the atmosphere not only of health, but of liberty and freedom? (Applause.) *Do not feel when we come up here that we have not only found the temple and the shrine of freedom, but that we have come with the actual living presence of the Goddess of Freedom?* (Loud Applause.) Once in her presence we see that no less capacious temple could be fit for the worship of her due.

I wish, my fellow citizens, that all my associates in public life could come up here with me and learn by experience, as I have done, the elevation and serenity of soul which pervade the people of the great Northwest. It is the only region of the United States in which I find fraternity and mutual charity fully developed. (Applause.) Since I first set my foot in the valley of

the Upper Mississippi I have met men of all sects and of all religions, men of the republican party and of the democratic party and of the American party, and I have not heard one reproachful word, one disdainful sentiment. I have seen that you can differ, and yet not disagree. (Applause.) I have seen that you can love your parties and the statesmen of your choice, and yet love still more the country, and its rulers, the people—the sovereign people—not the squatter sovereigns, scattered so widecast in distant and remote Territories which you are never to enter, and so devised that they may be sold, and that the Supreme Court of the United States may abolish sovereignty and the sovereigns also. (Laughter.) You love the sovereignty that you possess yourselves, where every man is his own sovereign—the popular sovereignty that belongs to me, and the popular sovereignty that belongs to you, and the equal popular sovereignty that belongs to every other man who is under the government and protection of the United States. (Applause.) Under the influence of such sentiments and feelings as these I scarcely know how to act or speak when I come before you at the command of the people of Minnesota, as a republican. I feel that if we could be but a little more indulgent, a little more patient with each other, a little more charitable, all the grounds on which we disagree would disappear and pass away, just as popular sovereignty is passing away; and let us all, if we cannot confess ourselves to be all republicans, at least agree that we are American citizens. (Applause.) I see here, moreover, how it is that in spite of sectional and personal ambition, the form and body and spirit of this nation organizes itself and consolidates itself out of the equilibrium of irrepressible and yet healthful political counterbalancing forces, and how out of that equilibrium is produced just exactly that one thing which the interests of the continent and of mankind require should be developed here—and that is a federal republic of separate republican and democratic States.

I see here how little you and I, and those who are wiser and better and greater than you or I, have done, and how little they can do, to produce the very political condition for the people of this continent which they are assuming, and under which they are permanently to remain—and that is the condition of a free people. I see that while we seemed to ourselves to have been trying to do much and to do everything, and while many fancy that they have done a great deal, yet what we have been doing, what we now are doing, what we shall hereafter do, and what we and those who may come after us shall continue to be doing, is just exactly what was necessary to be done, whether we knew it or not, for the interests of humanity on this globe, and therefore it was certain to be done, because necessity is only another expression or name for the higher law. God ordains that what is useful to be done shall be done. (Applause.) When I survey the American people as they are developing themselves fully and perfectly here, I see that they are doing what the exigencies of political society throughout the world have at last rendered it necessary to be done. Society tried for six thousand years how to live and improve, and perfect itself under monarchical and aristocratic systems of government, while prac-

tising a system of depredation and slavery on each other; and the result has been, all over the world, a complete and absolute failure. At last, at the close of the last century, the failure was discovered, and a revelation was made of the necessity of a system in which henceforth men should cease to enslave each other and should govern themselves. (Applause.) Nowhere in Africa, in Asia or in Europe, was there an open field where this great new work of the reorganization of a political society under more favorable forms of government could be attempted. They were all occupied. This great and unoccupied continent furnished the very theatre that was necessary, and to it came all the bold, the brave, the free men throughout the world, who feel and know that necessity, and who have the courage, the manhood and the humanity to labor to produce this great organization. Providence set apart this continent for this work, and, as I think, set apart and designated this particular locality for the place whence shall go forth continually the ever-renewing spirit which shall bring the people of all other portions of the continent up to a continual advance in the establishment of this system. I will make myself better understood by saying that, until the beginning of the present century, men had lived the involuntary subjects of political governments, and that the time had come when mankind could no longer consent to be so governed by force.

The time had come when men were to live voluntary citizens and sovereigns themselves of the States which they possessed; and that is the principle of the government established here. I has only one vital principle. All others are resolved into it. That one principle—what is it? It is the equality of every man who is a member of the State to be governed. If there be not absolute political equality, then some portion of the people are governed by force, and are not voluntary citizens; and whenever any portion of the citizens are governed by force, then you are carried so far backward again toward the old system of involuntary citizenship, or a government by king, lords and standing army. This was the great necessity, not of the people of the United States alone. It was not even the original conception of the people of the United States that a republican government was to be established for themselves alone; but the establishment of the republican system of the United States of America was only bringing out and reducing to actual practice the ideas and opinions which men had already formed all over the civilized world; and if you will refer to the action of our forefathers, you will find that while they labored, as they might well labor, to secure this government in its republican form for themselves and their posterity, yet they were conscious that they were erecting it as a model for the people of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. The old Continental Congress of 1787 declared that the interests of the United States were the interests of human nature, and that it was the political redemption of human nature that was to be worked out on the continent of North America, and, as I have said, it is to be brought to its perfection here in the valley of the Mississippi. Now, fellow citizens, the framers of the republic conceived this necessity—they assumed this high responsibility. They

never could have done so except for the crisis of the Revolution, which kindled enlightened patriotism within the bosoms of the people, and enabled them, for a brief period, to elevate themselves up above temporary and ephemeral interests and prejudices, and to rise to the great task of organizing and constituting a free government. The people understood the great principle on which it was to be founded—the political equality of the whole people—and that they did so understand it you will see in the Declaration of Independence, in which, beginning to lay the foundations of this great republic, they laid them on the great truth that all men are created equal, and have inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. But it was not the good fortune of our forefathers to be able to find full and ample materials, all of the right kind, for the erection of the temple of liberty which they constructed. Providence has so ordered it that all the materials for any edifice which the human head is required to devise and the human hand to construct cannot be found anywhere. If you propose to build a limestone house you may excavate the ground on which it is to be placed, and take them from the bosom of the earth the stones, and lay them all away in their proper place in the foundation and walls. But other materials besides the limestone enter into the noblest structure that you can make. There must be some lime and some sand, and some iron, and some wood, and you must combine materials to make any human structure.

Even the founders of a great republic like this, wishing and intending to place it on the principle of the equality of man, had to take such materials as they found. They had to take a society in which some were free and some were slaves, and to form a Union in which some were free states and some were slave states. They had the ideal before them, but they were unable to perfect it all at once. What did they do? They did as the architect does who raises a structure of stone and lime and sand; and where there is a weakness of the material, and where the strength of the edifice would be impaired, he applies braces and props, and bulwarks and battlements, to strengthen and fortify, so as to make the weak part combine with and be held together in solid connection with the firm and strong. That is what our fathers intended to do, and what they did do, when they framed the federal government. Seeing this element of slavery, which they could not eliminate, they said, "We will take care that it shall not weaken the edifice and bring it into ruin. We will take care that, although we may allow slaves now, the number of slaves hereafter shall diminish, and the number of white men shall increase, and that ultimately the element of free white men shall be so strong that the element of slavery shall be inadequate to produce any serious danger, calamity or disaster." How did they do this? They did it in a simple way: by authorizing Congress to prohibit, and practically by prohibiting, the African slave trade after the expiration of twenty years from the establishment of the constitution, supposing that if no more slaves were imported the American people—then almost unanimously in favor of emancipation—would be able to eliminate from the country the small amount of slavery, which would be left to decay and decline for want of

invigoration by the African slave trade. They did another thing. They set apart the territory northwest of the Ohio river—all of the unoccupied domain of the United States—for freemen only, declaring that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude should ever enter on its soil. They did one thing more. They declared that Congress should pass uniform laws of naturalization, so that when the importation of African slaves should cease voluntary emigration of freemen from all other lands should be encouraged and stimulated. Thus, while unable to exclude slavery from the system, they provided for the development and perfection of the principle—gradually approaching it—that all men are born free and equal.

And now, fellow citizens, we see all around us the results of that wise policy. Certain of the States concurred partially in the policy of the fathers. I need not tell you what States they were. They were Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Some other States did not. I need not tell you what States they were. They were the six Southern States of the Union. The six Southern States said: "Although the Constitution has arrested the slave trade and invited immigration, and adopted the policy of making all the men of the States free and equal, yet we will adhere to the system of slavery." Well, what is the result? You see it in the cities of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. You see it in the wheat fields of New York, of Ohio, of Indiana, of Illinois, of Wisconsin. You see it in the flocks of sheep in Vermont and New Hampshire. You see it in the cattle that multiply and abound upon a thousand hills. You see it in the millions of spindles in the manufactories of the East, and in the forges and furnaces of Pennsylvania. You see it in the crowded shipping of New York, and in her palaces and towers, ambitiously emulating the splendors of the Old World, and grasping to herself the commerce of the globe. You see, even in California and Oregon, the same results. You see them in the copper dug out on the banks of Lake Superior, the iron in Pennsylvania, the gypsum in New York, the salt in Ohio and New York, the lead in Illinois, and the silver and the gold in the free States of the Pacific coast. In all these you see the fruits of this policy.

Neither in forests, nor mines, nor manufactories, nor workshops, is there one African slave that turns a wheel or supplies oil to keep the machinery in motion. (Applause.) On the other hand you see millions of freemen crowding each other in a perpetual wave, rolling over from Europe on the Atlantic coast, spreading over and building up great States from the foot of the Alleghany mountains, rolling over thence year after year, until they build up in nine years a capital in Minnesota equal to the capital built in any slave State in the Union in two hundred years. (Cheers.) You see here the fruits of this great policy of the fathers; you see what comes of a wise policy. But do not let us mistake this policy. It is not policy; it is the simple national practice of justice, of equal and exact justice to all men—for this freedom which we boasted highly, which we love so dearly, and to justify which we professed above every other earthly goodly and virtuous which earth is unfit for the habitation of man—what is it? Nothing

but you allowing to me my rights, and I allowing to you equal rights—every man having exactly his own, the right to decide whether he will labor or perish, whether he will labor and eat, or will be idle and die—and if he will labor, for what he will labor and for whom he will labor, and the right to discharge his employer just exactly as the employer can discharge him. (Cheers.) You see the fruits of this policy in another way. Go over the American continent, from one end of it to the other, wherever the principle of equality has been retained, and every citizen of a State, and every citizen of every other State, and every exile from a foreign nation, may write, print, speak and vote—when he acquires the right to vote—just exactly as he pleases, and there is no man to molest him, no man to terrify him, no man even to complain. And now reverse the picture, and go into any State which has retained the principle of the inequality of man, and determined that it will maintain it to the last, and you will find the State where not even the native born citizen and slaveholder, or certainly none but him, can express his opinion on the question whether the African is or is not a descendant of Ham, or whether he is equal or inferior to the white man, and if he be inferior, whether it is not the duty of the white man to enslave him. No, "mam's the word" for freemen wherever slavery is retained and cherished—silence, the absence of freedom of speech and of freedom of the press. What kind of freedom is that? Is there a man in Minnesota, who would for one day consent to live in it if he were not indulged in the exercise of the right to hurrah for Lincoln or to hurrah for Douglas, to hurrah for freedom or to hurrah for slavery. I think that these 180,000 people would be seen moving right out, east and west, into British North America or into Kamtschatka, anywhere on the earth, to get out of this luxuriant and fertile valley, if any power, human or divine, should declare to them that they spoke and voted their real sentiments and their real choice at their peril. Now, fellow citizens, you need only look around through such a mass of American citizens as I can see before me, and you may go over all the free States in this Union, and you will find them every day of the week somewhere gathered together, expressing their opinions, and preparing to declare their will, just exactly as you are doing. Does this *happen* to be so? Is it man's work, or device, or contrivance, that on this land, on this side of the great lakes, on this side of the Atlantic Ocean, on this side only of the Pacific Ocean, men may all meet or may all stay apart, may all speak, think, act, print, write and vote just exactly as they please, while there is no other land on the face of the earth where ten men can be assembled together to exercise the same rights without being dispersed by an armed band of soldiers? Does it *happen* to be so in the United States, or is it the result of that higher law, controlling the destinies of races and of nations of men, so as to bring out and perfect here what I have described as the great constitution of society, of a self-governing people, the practice of equal and exact justice among each other. Manifestly it is not of man's device or contrivance, but it is a superior power that

— "shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them how we may."

Now, fellow citizens, while we see how obviously this is the result of controlling necessity, how obviously we read that it is in accordance with the very purpose of a beneficent Providence, how singular and strange it is that so much pains have been taken to defeat and prevent the organization and perfection of this very system of government among us. What has not the nation seen done and permitted to be done at Washington? They have permitted States to be made, and judgments to be rendered in their name, declaring that men are not freemen, but that in certain conditions and in certain places they are merchandise. The Supreme Court of the United States never rises without recording judgments and directing executions for the sale of men, women and children, as merchandise. And this is done in your name and mine. The constitution never declared, never intended to declare, was never by its framers understood to declare, that any man could be a chattel and merchandise. Applause. "Three cheers for that declaration.") All that it did declare was that all men should have rights to personal security and personal liberty within the action of the federal government. You see how we have had new religious systems established among us teaching that the African slaves among us, all Africans, are the children of an accursed parent, who was cursed not only in his own person and in his own day and generation, but in all his generations, and teaching that everybody had a right to curse his generation. We have had religious systems established among us, teaching that it is our duty to capture and return to slavery slaves escaping from their masters, because St. Paul sent back Onesimus, as they say, to his master—religious systems even teaching that it is the duty of men in a free State, not only to submit to laws passed for the purpose of extending human bondage, but even personally to execute them. You have seen in a portion of the Union how the great governing race, the white men, actually deprive themselves largely of the advantages of education and instruction for the greater security of keeping slaves in ignorance, so that schools and colleges and universities, as they are organized and perfected in the free States, and now in most of the States of Western Europe, are incapable of being had or maintained in the slave States. You have seen how we have, in order to counteract the policy of our forefathers on the subject of slavery, surrendered in 1820 the State of Missouri and all that part of the Territory of Louisiana that lies south 36° 30' to slavery, and contented ourselves with saying to freedom what lay north of that line; and you have seen how, only forty years afterwards, in order to counteract and entirely defeat the policy of the fathers in establishing such institutions as those, we surrendered and gave up the whole of what we had saved in 1820, surrendering Kansas and the whole of our possessions from one end of the continent to the other, to be made slave colonies and slave States, if slave owners could make them so, and agreeing that we would receive them into the Union, as we had already for like considerations agreed to receive four slave States out of Texas, to the end that government might not continue to be, and develop itself to be, a government founded on the equality of man, but should be and remain forever a government founded on the

principle of property in man. You have seen, fellow citizens, within the last thirty years, how the Congress of the United States, in order to defeat the great policy, has suppressed for a period of nearly ten years freedom of debate and the right of petition on the subject of slavery in the House of Representatives and in the Senate of the United States. You know now how the mails of the United States are subjected to espionage, to the end that any paper, or letter, or writing that shall argue for freedom against slavery, shall be abstracted and withdrawn, in order to fortify the power of slavery. You have seen the federal government connive and co-operate and combine with the slave party in endeavoring to force slavery on the people of Kansas when they had refused to accept it. If you have seen all these things done, I am sorry to say that most of you have, at some time in your lives, given your consent that they should be done. The American people have consented to all this action of their own government to counteract and subvert the very principles of freedom established by the constitution.

Now, since all this has been done, let us see what is the result after all—what advantage has slavery got, and what has freedom lost, while we have for forty years given our free consent that freedom should be stripped of everything and that slavery should be invested with all power. Why, they have arrested the march of emancipation at the line of Pennsylvania, and have left the ancient slavery still existing in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia; and they have added to them some five or six slave states in the southwestern angle of the Ohio and the Mississippi. That is all that they have done. And on the other hand, this great vital principle of the republic, this principle of freedom and equality, what has it done? It has abolished slavery in seven of the original states, and has produced new and strong and most vigorous and virtuous states all along the shores of the great lakes and across to the valley of the Mississippi, and it has established freedom beyond the power of being overthrown on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean.

Certainly, since we can lay so little claim to having produced these results by our own work, or wisdom, or virtue, *what could it have been but that overruling Power, which, by its higher law, controls even the perverse wills of men, and which means that this shall be, henceforth and forever, as it was established in the beginning, a land, not of slavery, but a land of freedom.* (Cheers.) *Fellow citizens, either in one way or the other, whether you agree with me in attributing it to the interposition of Divine Providence or not, this battle has been fought, this victory has been won. Slavery to-day is, for the first time, not only powerless, but without influence in the American republic. The serried ranks of party after party, which rallied under it to sustain and support it, are broken and dissolved under the pressure of the march—the great and powerful march—of the American people, determined to restore freedom to its original and just position in the government. For the first time in the history of the United States, no man in a free State can be bribed to vote for slavery. The government of the United States has not the power to make good a bribe or a seduction by which to make and convert Democrats to support slavery.* (Applause.) *For the first time in the*

history of the republic the slave power has not even the power to terrify or alarm the freeman so as to make him submit, and scheme, and coincide, and compromise. It ralls now with a feeble voice, as it thundered in our ears for twenty or thirty years past. With a feeble and muttering voice they cry out that they will tear the Union to pieces. (Derisive laughter.) *Who's afraid?* (Laughter and cries of "No one!") They complain that if we will not surrender our principles, and our system, and our right—being a majority—to rule, and if we will not accept their system and such rulers as they will give us, they will go out of the Union. *Who's afraid?* (Laughter.) *Nobody's afraid; nobody can be bought.*

Now, fellow citizens, let me ask you, since you are so prompt at answering—suppose that any time within the last forty years we could have found American people in the free States everywhere just as they are everywhere in the free States now—in such a condition that there was no party that could be bought, nobody that could be scared—how much sooner do you think this revolution would have come in which we are now engaged? I do not believe there has been one day since 1787 until now when slavery had any power in this government, except what it derived from buying up men of weak virtue, no principle and great cupidity, and terrifying men of weak nerve in the free States. (Laughter and applause.) And now I come to ask what has made this great political change? How is it that the American people who, only ten years ago, said, "Take part, take all"—who, only six years ago, said, "Take Kansas, carry slavery over it," who, when the tears of the widows and the blood of the martyrs of liberty cried out from the ground and appealed to them for aid and help, and sympathy, said, "Let Kansas shriek;" how is it that in the space of six years you have all become—the whole people of the North and of the Northwest, the whole people of the free States—have become all at once so honest that none of them can be bought, so brave that none of them can be scared? I will tell you. Theorists and visionaries on the Atlantic coast, who of all men in the world were safest from the invasion of slavery and had least to suffer from it, while these prairies and fields and wildernesses were as yet being filled up and organized, could not be convinced of the imminence of the danger. It has been next to impossible to convince the man who lives on the sidewalk of an Atlantic city, or even the farmer in his field, who lives in Ontario or Cayuga, or Berks, or in any of the counties of the Eastern States, that it was a matter of very great consequence to him whether slaves or freemen constitute the people—the ruling power of the new States. But just in the right moment, when the battle was as good as lost, the emigration from the Eastern States and from the Old World, into Michigan and Wisconsin, and Minnesota and Iowa, rose up in the exercise and enjoyment of that freedom which had been saved to them by the ordinance of 1787, and, appreciating its value and importance, and feeling, every man for himself, that he neither would be a slave nor make a slave, nor own a slave, nor allow any particular man to make or buy, or own a slave within the State to which they belonged, they came like Blucher to the rescue, and the field of Waterloo was won. The

Northwest has vindicated the wisdom of the statesmen of 1787, and the virtue of the American people; and now since you were so determined that slavery should be arrested and that freedom should henceforth be national and slavery only sectional, we of the Atlantic States are becoming just as honest and just as brave as you are. (Applause.)

Fellow citizens, I must not be mis-interpreted. I have said that this battle was fought, and this victory won. I said so, perhaps, in the Senate of the United States, four years ago, and I was thought to have thereby, instead of encouraging the great army of freedom to consummate its triumph, tended to demoralize its energies. I knew better. I knew that men work all the better, and are all the braver when they have hope and confidence of success and triumph, instead of acting under the influence of despondency and despair. This battle is fought and this victory is won, provided that you stand determined to maintain the great Republican party under its great and glorious leader, Abraham Lincoln, in inaugurating its principles into the administration of the government, and provided you stand by him in his administration, if it shall be, as I trust it shall, a wise, and just and good one, *until the adversary shall find out that he has been beaten and shall voluntarily retire from the field.* (Applause.)

A voice—"We'll do it."

Unless you do that, there is still danger that all that has been gained may be lost. There is one danger remaining—one only. Slavery can never now force itself, or be forced, from the stock that exists among us, into the Territories of the United States. But the cupidity of trade, and the ambition of those whose interests are identified with slavery, are such that they may clandestinely and surreptitiously reopen, either within the forms of law or without them, the African slave trade, and may bring in new cargoes of African slaves at \$100 a head and scatter them into the Territories; and, once getting possession of new territory, they may again operate on the cupidity or the patriotism of the American people.

Therefore it is that I enjoin upon you all to regard yourselves as men who, although you have achieved the victory and are entitled even now, it seems, to laurels, have enlisted for the war and for your natural lives. You are committed to maintain this great policy until it shall have been so firmly reinstated in the administration of the government, and so firmly established in the hearts and wills and affections of the American people, that there shall never be again a demoralization from this great work. We look to you of the Northwest. Whether this is to be a land of slavery or of freedom, the people of the Northwest are to be the arbiters of its destiny. The virtue that is to save this nation must reside in the Northwest, for the simple reason that it is not the people who live on the sidewalks, and who deal in merchandise on the Atlantic or the Pacific coasts, that exercise the power of government, of sovereignty, in the United States. The political power of the United States resides in the owners of the lands of the United States. The owners of workshops and of the banks are in the East, and the owners of the gold mines are in the far West; but the owners of the land of the United States are to be found along

the shores of the Mississippi river, from New Orleans to the sources of the great rivers and the great lakes. On both sides of this stream are the people who hold in their hands the destinies of the republic. I have been asked by many of you what I think of Minnesota. I will not enlarge further than to say that Minnesota must be either a great State or a mean one, just as her people shall have wisdom and virtue to decide.

That some great states are to be built up in the valley of the Mississippi I know. You will no longer hear hereafter of the "Old Dominion" state; dominion has passed away from Virginia long ago. Pennsylvania is no longer the keystone of the American Union, for the arch has been extended from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific Ocean, and the centre of the arch is moved westward. A new keystone is to be built in that arch. New York will cease to be

the Empire State, and a new Empire State will grow up in a northern latitude, where the lands are rich, and where the people who cultivate them are all free and all equal. That state which shall be truest to the great fundamental principle of the government — that state which shall be most faithful, most vigorous, in developing and perfecting society on this principle — will be at once the new Dominion State, the new Keystone State, the new Empire State. (Applause.) If there is any state in the northwest that has been kinder to me than the State of Minnesota, and if such a consideration could influence me, then I might, perhaps have a feeling of emulation for some other state. I will only say, that every man who has an honest heart and a clear head can see that these proud distinctions are within the grasp of the people of Minnesota, and every generous heart will be willing to give her a fair chance to secure it. (Loud Applause.)